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TAGS: CU, GY, AO, PFOR

SUBJECT: GUYANESE-CUBAN RELATIONS

NOT RELEASABLE TO FOREIGN NATIONALS/NOT RELEASABLE TO CONTRACTORS OR CONTRACTOR-CONSULTANTS/WARNING NOTICE-SENSITIVE INTELLIGENCE SOURCES AND METHODS INVOLVED

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF INR REPORT NO. 501, "GUYANESE-CUBAN RELATIONS: GROWING CLOSER," DATED JUNE 30, 1976.

2. GUYANA'S RELATIONS WITH CUBA HAVE PROGRESSED OVER THE PAST YEAR FROM A STATE OF MILD FLIRTATION TO ONE OF CLOSE FRIENDSHIP, INVOLVING COLLABORATION ON INTERNAL SECURITY MATTERS AND CERTAIN FOREIGN POLICY QUESTIONS.

3. GEORGETOWN'S DEEPENING INVOLVEMENT WITH HAVANA CAN BE SEPARATED INTO THREE DISTINCT PERIODS. THE FIRST STAGE, LASTING FROM GUYANA'S INDEPENDENCE IN 1966 TO EARLY 1975, WAS FRIENDLY BUT LOW-KEY. PRIME MINISTER BURNHAM'S APRIL 1975 VISIT TO HAVANA SIGNED THE START OF A SECOND STAGE, ONE MARKED BY A CONSCIOUS GUYANESE EFFORT TO DRAW CLOSE TO THE CUBANS FOR DOMESTIC POLITICAL REASONS. THE MOST RECENT PERIOD EMERGED ROUGHLY AT THE HEIGHT OF CUBA'S INVOLVEMENT IN ANGOLA LAST NOVEMBER AND

IS CHARACTERIZED BY A GUYANESE DESIRE FOR CUBAN PROTECTION AGAINST FEARED OUTSIDE INTERVENTION.

4. FIRST EFFORTS:

5. IN THE EARLY STAGE OF THE GUYANESE-CUBAN RELATIONSHIP, CUBA WAS BREAKING OUT OF ISOLATION, PARTLY THROUGH SUCCESSFUL ATTEMPTS TO CONVINCE ITS NEIGHBORS THAT IT WAS NO LONGER EXPORTING REVOLUTION, AND PARTLY BECAUSE OF HEMISPHERIC RESENTMENT OF US "POLICE" EFFORTS. GUYANA AND OTHER NEWLY NATIONALISTIC REGIMES IN THE AMERICAS FELT THAT CULTIVATING CASTRO WAS A MEANS OF DEMONSTRATING FREEDOM FROM AMERICAN DOMINATION AND COURTING INTERNAL LEFTIST POLITICAL SUPPORT.

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6. GUYANA'S EFFORTS, RESTRICTED TO TRADE AND LOW-LEVEL TECHNICAL AND CULTURAL EXCHANGES, WERE NOT REALLY A MATTER OF MAJOR POLICY. MOREOVER, ACIDITY DEVELOPED OVER EARLY UNSATISFACTORY TRADE EXCHANGES, WHICH BROKE OFF FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS. GEORGETOWN DID NOT ESTABLISH DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH HAVANA UNTIL DECEMBER 1972, AND GUYANA'S MORE RECENT IMPORTANT DEALINGS WITH THE CUBANS INVOLVED A RESIDENT CUBAN FISHING MISSION AND SOME NEW MINOR TRADE. IN 1973, BURNHAM AND JAMAICAN PREMIER MANLEY SPARED A FLIGHT WITH CASTRO TO THE NON-ALIGNED SUMMIT IN ALGIERS AND WERE IMPRESSED BY CASTRO AND HIS DESCRIPTION OF CUBAN ACHIEVEMENTS BUT DISTURBED BY THE CUBAN LEADER'S PRO-SOVIET SENTIMENTS.

7. RELATIONS WARM UP:

8. IN EARLY 1975 BURNHAM APPARENTLY DECIDED TO DEVELOP A CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH CUBA AND SIGNALLED THIS NEW POLICY BY BECOMING THE SECOND HEMISPHERIC LEADER (CHILE'S ALLENDE WAS THE FIRST) TO VISIT HAVANA. BURNHAM BASED HIS DECISION ON A BELIEF THAT:

(A)--BY OBTAINING CUBAN SUPPORT HE COULD UNDERCUT OPPOSITION LEADER AND MARXIST CHEDDI JAGAN AND TAKE AN IMPORTANT STEP TOWARD HIS PROBABLE GOAL OF ESTABLISHING A ONE-PARTY STATE;

(B)--CUBA HAD SOLVED MANY OF THE SAME PROBLEMS THAT BESET GUYANA AND COULD THUS SERVE AS A MODEL FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT;

(C)--RELATIONS WITH CUBA WOULD UNDERSCORE GUYANA'S CREDENTIALS AS A LEADER OF THE THIRD WORLD, WHOSE

SUPPORT THE GUYANESE FEEL IS ESSENTIAL TO OVERCOME THEIR COUNTRY'S SMALL SIZE AND ECONOMIC WEAKNESS.

9. THE NEW RELATIONSHIP RESULTED IN AN AGREEMENT TO EXCHANGE RESIDENT EMBASSIES, SOME INCREASE IN TRADE, AND A GUYANA-CUBA MIXED DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION, WHOSE ACCOMPLISHMENTS INCLUDE:

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(A)--A CUBAN PROMISE TO ASSIST THE GUYANESE IN CREATION OF CUBAN-STYLE WORK-STUDY PROGRAMS;

(B)--CUBAN TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE IN GUYANESE HEALTH CONSTRUCTION AND SUGAR CANE PRODUCTION; AND

(C)--MONITORING OF THE 1975 FISHERY AGREEMENT AND THE CONDUCT OF FEASIBILITY STUDIES FOR A DEEP-SEA GUYANESE FISHING FLEET.

10. OVERALL, LITTLE MATERIAL BENEFIT FOR EITHER COUNTRY CAME OUT OF THIS SECOND STAGE. THE GAINS WERE MAINLY POLITICAL: CUBA FURTHER DIMINISHED ITS ISOLATION, AND BURNHAM STRENGTHENED HIS INTERNAL POSITION AND OBTAINED INCREASED INTERNATIONAL PRESTIGE BY ASSERTING HIS INDEPENDENCE.

11. ANGOLAN WATERSHED:

12. SINCE AT LEAST MID-1975 BURNHAM HAS BEEN DEVELOPING FEARS OF IMMINENT OUTSIDE INTERVENTION. AS LONG AGO AS LAST AUGUST HE BEGAN TO SHOW SUSPICIONS THAT

WASHINGTON WAS PLOTTING HIS OVERTHROW WITH THE HELP OF BRAZIL AND VENEZUELA--TWO COUNTRIES HE BELIEVES ARE JEALOUS AND FEARFUL OF GUYANA'S "SUCCESSFUL" SOCIALIST DEVELOPMENT. MOREOVER, PRECISELY BECAUSE HE ONCE WORKED CLOSELY WITH THE US, HE HAS AN EXAGGERATED THOUGH UNDERSTANDABLE BELIEF IN OUR ABILITY AND WILLINGNESS TO INFLUENCE GUYANESE INTERNAL AFFAIRS.

13. CONSEQUENTLY, EVEN BEFORE ANGOLA, BURNHAM WAS SEARCHING FOR A PROTECTOR. THE PRC IS TOO FAR AWAY, AND IN ANY CASE PROMISING CONTACTS DEVELOPED DURING THE PREVIOUS YEAR WERE ALREADY DIMMING. RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIETS, WHO ARE SHOWING INCREASING INTERESTS IN GUYANA'S ALUMINA PRODUCTION, ARE GOOD, BUT BURNHAM DISTRUSTS THEM AND FEARS THAT MOSCOW WOULD DESERT HIM AT THE FIRST OPPORTUNITY TO PUT JAGAN BACK IN POWER.

14. SUDDENLY, CUBA'S SUCCESS IN AFRICA DEMONSTRATED
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THAT A POTENTIAL DEFENDER LESS TARRIED WITH SUSPICION

THAN MOSCOW MIGHT BE CLOSE AT HAND. DURING THE ANGOLAN INTERVENTION, GEORGETOWN GAVE THE CUBANS STOPOVER AND REFUELING RIGHTS FOR AT LEAST TWO ANGOLA-BOUND FLIGHTS, AND THE GUYANESE HAVE PUBLICLY SAID THAT THEY WOULD FURNISH SIMILAR ASSISTANCE IN THE FUTURE IF NEEDED. GUYANA'S WELCOME OF AND ASSISTANCE TO THE CUBANS, WHILE BASED HEAVILY ON A STRONG EMOTIONAL IDENTIFICATION WITH A "BLACK" ANTI-COLONIALIST EFFORT, ALSO REFLECTED A DESIRE TO BIND THE CUBANS TO COME TO GUYANA'S DEFENSE.

15. COLLABORATION ON INTERNAL SECURITY:

16. SINCE ANGOLA, BURNHAM HAS BEEN DEVELOPING A STILL MORE INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP WITH HAVANA, THOUGH BRAZILIAN AND VENEZUELAN MEDIA STORIES OF A MASSIVE CUBAN MILITARY PRESENCE IN GUYANA APPEAR GROUNDLESS. MANY OF THE BRAZILIAN REPORTS APPARENTLY ARE BASED ON FLIMSILY DOCUMENTED STORIES FILED BY A STATE GOVERNMENT PRESS OFFICIAL IN RORAIMA TERRITORY, ON THE GUYANESE BORDER, IN AN ATTEMPT TO DRUM UP INCREASED ATTENTION AND DEVELOPMENT AID FROM BRASILIA.

17. NEVERTHELESS, GUYANA UNQUESTIONABLY HAS BEEN COMING CLOSER TO THE CUBANS AND RECEIVING MORE CUBAN ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE, MOST SIGNIFICANTLY HAVING TO DO WITH THE TRAINING OF SECURITY PERSONNEL AND THE PRIME MINISTER'S PERSONAL SAFETY.

(A)--CUBANS REPORTEDLY ARE GIVING GUYANA VARIOUS TYPES OF ASSISTANCE ON SECURITY MATTERS, INCLUDING THE

ORGANIZATION AND TRAINING OF BURNHAM'S PERSONAL BODY-GUARD, AND ADVICE ON HIGH-LEVEL SECURITY FORCE APPOINTMENTS.

(B)--SEVERAL HUNDRED GUYANESE TROOPS HAVE BEEN GIVEN TRAINING IN CUBA.

(C)--CUBAN PERSONNEL BUILT A PORTABLE DEPOT TO STORE AVIATION FUEL AT THE TIMEHRI AIRPORT WHICH COULD BE
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MADE AVAILABLE TO THE AIR ARM OF THE GUYANESE DEFENSE FORCE.

(D)--ACCORDING TO AN UNCONFIRMED REPORT, GEORGETOWN MAY BE NEGOTIATING THROUGH HAVANA FOR SOVIET ARMS.

(E)--THERE HAVE BEEN RELATIVELY CREDIBLE REPORTS THAT SEVERAL DOZEN CUBANS MAY BE DEPLOYED IN CAMPS AT THE BRAZILIAN AND VENEZUELAN BORDERS.

18. PROSPECTS:

19. IN THE EVENT OF FURTHER CUBAN ADVENTURISM IN AFRICA, IT IS LIKELY THAT BURNHAM WOULD AGAIN FURNISH REFUELING FACILITIES TO THE CUBANS, IF ASKED. GEORGETOWN'S CUBAN CONNECTION MIGHT ALSO RAISE, AT LEAST TO VENEZUELA AND BRAZIL, THE SPECTRE OF HAVANA'S EMPLOYMENT OF GUYANA AS A CONTINENTAL LAUNCHING PAD FOR RENEWED ATTEMPTS TO EXPORT REVOLUTION OR EVEN OVERT MILITARY ACTION. THEIR FEARS, HOWEVER, APPEAR OVERDRAWN: BURNHAM HAS REPEATEDLY INSISTED, PROBABLY SINCERELY, THAT HE WOULD NEVER ALLOW GUYANESE TERRITORY TO BE USED AGAINST HIS NEIGHBORS.

20. CASTRO, TOO, WOULD PROBABLY SEE SUCH A POLICY AS COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE:

(A)--THE CUBANS ARE NOT ECONOMICALLY STRONG ENOUGH TO SUPPORT A SATELLITE STATE ON THEIR OWN, AND THE SOVIETS WOULD HAVE LITTLE TO GAIN BY PROVIDING NECESSARY FINANCING.

(B)--INTRODUCTION OF SIZABLE NUMBERS OF CUBAN TPOOPS INTO GUYANA, WHILE NOT INCONCEIVABLE, COULD RESULT IN A MILITARY CONFRONTATION WITH THE BRAZILIANS AND VENEZUELAN, WHICH HAVAHA PROBABLY IS NOT READY TO RISK UNNECESSARILY.

(C)--TRANSFORMING GUYANA INTO A CLIENT STATE WOULD BADLY FRIGHTEN OTHER HEMISPHERIC GOVERNMENTS, LEAVING HAVANA MORE ISOLATED THAN EVER.

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21. OVERALL, THEREFORE, SOME TIGHTENING OF GUYANESE-CUBAN RELATIONS CAN BE EXPECTED, BUT GUYANA WILL PROBABLY NOT INTENTIONALLY, OR AT HAVANA'S BEHEST, BECOME A CUBAN SATELLITE. GUYANA, AND POSSIBLY CUBA, PROBABLY HOPES TO ESTABLISH A LOW-KEY MUTUAL ASSISTANCE ARRANGEMENT THAT, WHILE NOT COMPLETELY ALIENATING BRAZIL AND VENEZUELA AND JUSTIFYING AGGRESSIVE REACTIONS BY THEM, WILL SERVE TO SYMBOLIZE AN INTERNATIONAL GUARANTEE OF GUYANA'S BORDERS AGAINST FOREIGN ATTACK. NEVERTHELESS, GUYANA'S EXPRESSED DEPENDENCE ON CUBA FOR PROTECTION AGAINST EXTERNAL THREATS, HOWEVER LOW-KEY IN APPEARANCE, ALMOST CERTAINLY WILL IRRITATE THE BRAZILIAN AND VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENTS AND BE A CAUSE OF CONTINUING TENSION AMONG THE PARTIES. KISSINGER

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